

# Virginia Department of Historic Resources

## PIF Resource Information Sheet

This information sheet is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the necessary data to be able to evaluate the significance of the proposed district for possible listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This is not a formal nomination, but a necessary step in determining whether or not the district could be considered eligible for listing. Please take the time to fill in as many fields as possible. A greater number of completed fields will result in a more timely and accurate assessment. Staff assistance is available to answer any questions you have in regards to this form.

<b>General Property Information</b>		For Staff Use Only DHR ID #: 122-5799	
District Name(s): <u>Norfolk &amp; Western Railroad Historic District</u>			
District or Selected Building Date(s): <u>1884 - 1964</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post              Open to the Public? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Main District Streets and/or Routes: <u>22nd St; 23rd St; 24th St; 25th St; 26th St; Church St; Colley Ave; Colonial Ave; Granby St; Hampton Blvd; Llewellyn Ave; Monticello Ave; Omohundro Ave</u>		City: <u>Norfolk</u> Zip: <u>23517</u>	
County or Ind. City: <u>City of Norfolk</u>		USGS Quad(s): <u>Norfolk South/Norfolk North</u>	
<b>Physical Character of General Surroundings</b>			
Acreage: <u>195</u> Setting (choose one): <input type="checkbox"/> City <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Town <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Corridor			
Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features/Streetscapes: The district is roughly 1.75 miles long and borders the north and south sides of the historic Norfolk & Western Railroad track from roughly Church Street to the east and Hampton Boulevard to the west. The district extends 1-2 blocks to the south and up to five blocks to the north, though most of the northern side is 2-3 blocks deep. The area is completely flat with little vegetation other than a few patches of grass and occasional trees. There are some areas with sidewalks, though much of the area is light industrial and not pedestrian focused. Most buildings are 1-2 stories and are built to the lot line on one or more sides and having large commercial footprints. There are a number of vacant lots which are either used for parking or are covered with gravel and/or grass, though the overall district is densely built. To the north is the residential Park Place historic district. To the south are a couple of blocks of retail and then the large Ghent neighborhood.			
Ownership Categories: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public-Local <input type="checkbox"/> Public-State <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal			
<b>General District Information</b>			
What were the historical uses of the resources within the proposed district? Examples include: Dwelling, Store, Barn, etc...			
Commerce: warehouse; Agriculture: processing, storage; Industry/Processing: manufacturing, industrial storage; Transportation: rail-related			
What are the current uses? (if other than the historical use)		<u>Commerce: business, specialty store, restaurant; Landscape: parking lot</u>	
Architectural styles or elements of buildings within the proposed district:		<u>Late 19th and 20th Century Commercial Style; Art Deco; Moderne</u>	
Architects, builders, or original owners of buildings within the proposed district:			
Are there any known threats to this district?		<u>Vacancy; Neglect</u>	

**General Description of District:** (Please describe building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district and a general setting and/or streetscape description.)

The Norfolk & Western Railroad Historic District consists of approximately 195 acres in a narrow band of large commercial and light industrial buildings which border the current Norfolk Southern railroad line for approximately 1.75 miles from roughly Church Street on the eastern end to just west of Hampton Boulevard. The district is typical of what is seen near the termination point of rail lines in urban areas with one-to-two blocks to the south and up to five blocks to the north of the railroad tracks filled with light industrial development. The land comprising the district is completely flat with little vegetation other than scattered patches of grass and occasional trees. The streets are laid out in a grid pattern with numbered streets running east to west and named streets running north to south. There are some sidewalks, though the architectural and functional nature of the area is not pedestrian focused. There are also two large concrete historic railroad underpasses at Monticello Avenue, on the eastern side of the district, and at Hampton Boulevard at the western end. To the north of the district is the residential portion of the Park Place Historic District and to the east is further residential development. South of the district is a narrow band of retail development and then the large Ghent single family neighborhood. To the west is further residential development with the Lambert's Point coal facility directly west at the end of the railroad line.

There are approximately 150-175 properties containing at least 200 resources, approximately two thirds of which are contributing. The buildings are mostly one-to-two stories and are built to the lot line on one or more sides with generally large footprints. There are a handful of three and four story buildings, particularly at the eastern end of the district as well as south of the rail line. Lot sizes can vary from a quarter to an entire block. There are a number of vacant lots, typically used for parking or covered with gravel and/or grass, though the overall district is densely built. The buildings are generally brick or concrete block construction with flat roofs, reflecting new commercial building trends away from frame construction for fire safety. Most buildings serve as warehouses or processing/manufacturing facilities and date from the early-to-mid twentieth century. More recent infill buildings follow the scale and massing of historic resources. The area was fully developed before World War II, though the building styles and types continued to evolve.

While most buildings within the district fall into the large category of Commercial Style, there are notable examples of Art Deco and Moderne influenced buildings. Perhaps the most impressive building in the district is the former General Baking Company bakery located at 731-741 East 25<sup>th</sup> Street. Constructed in 1929, the three-story yellow brick and terra cotta surfaced building features pilasters and crenellations which appear Gothic Revival in nature, while it also has stone details and vertical elements which seem more Art Deco inspired.

The Nolde Brothers Inc. building, constructed in 1940, is a unique example of Art Deco inspired design with the name of the company in large glazed yellow brick formed letters creating an extended parapet on the west façade and south elevation. The building also has a two-story, vertical pavilion entrance framed by two piers formed from glazed brick and a central flat stone surface between. There is also a large single round window on the façade. A number of other buildings utilize Art Deco and Moderne design elements, though not to this extent.

**Significance Statement:** Briefly note any significant events, personages, and/or families associated with the proposed district. It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or genealogies to this form. Please list all sources of information. Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

The Norfolk & Western Railroad purchased 325 acres at Lamberts Point in 1882 with the primary purpose of creating a spur to increase the company's capacity for shipping coal from western Virginia, and beyond. As with all commercial development, downtown Norfolk was too congested to handle the needs of the expanding coal market and development moved away from downtown. The Lamberts Point terminal would also help N&W compete with the new C&O coal pier at Newport News. The 1884 construction of the Lamberts Point spur, and its accompanying coal pier, were the primary driving force in the transformation of this emerging area into manufacturing and light industrial uses. The Virginia coal railroad line to Sewell's Point also spurred on expansion in other areas of the city.

This new N&W Lamberts Point line brought service to new areas of the rapidly expanding City of Norfolk in addition to serving the new coal pier. Developers eventually utilized this new rail line access to transform the newly developing areas north and south of the railroad line into a dense light commercial and light industrial district. The trend of industrial building following newly built railroad lines and moving out of urban centers was one occurring across the United States during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Having storage or processing facilities directly on railroad lines represented a revolution in the transportation of goods for many businesses.

Norfolk annexed the area which comprises the Norfolk & Western Railroad Historic District, along with what would become Colonial Place, Riverview, and Lafayette Park, from Norfolk County in 1902. Most of this area was developed as residential neighborhoods with a few exceptions, most particularly the blocks surrounding the railroad line. Much of this new development along the new edges of Norfolk also pulled industrial development away from the crowded waterfront. Additionally, the surrounding residential development provided housing for the workers in these new commercial and industrial areas.

The expansion of Norfolk shipping, as well as the port, during World War I, while it did decline for a few years after the war, was also an impetus for construction of many of the warehouses constructed in the late 1910s. Between 1914 and 1926 Norfolk's combined value of exports and imports rose from less than thirteen million dollars to more than one hundred fifty-four million dollars. Products such as bags, tobacco, peanuts, and cotton were stored and/or processed along the tracks. However, as the twentieth century progressed these commodities were squeezed out of the Norfolk ports in favor of coal, other commodities, and finished goods. As the more traditional commodities fell in exports at the Norfolk port, many of the warehouses along the railroad either became vacant or were adapted for more commercial, rather than industrial, uses. While uses have changed, the character and integrity of the Norfolk & Western Railroad Historic District has been retained from its late nineteenth and early twentieth century period of development.

The Norfolk & Western Railroad Historic District is eligible under Criterion A for Commerce as represented by the uninterrupted business use of many buildings, including a few dating to the late nineteenth century. It is also eligible under Criterion A for Industry as reflected by the numerous manufacturing, processing, and storage facilities which have operated in the district for more than a century. Additionally, the district is eligible under Criterion A for Transportation for its link to the Norfolk & Western railroad line, which is itself the largest and oldest contributing resource to the district. Finally, the district is eligible under Criterion C for Architecture as a large, dense, and intact early railroad line industrial area with numerous contributing resources and with good integrity.

## Bibliography

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Jeffries, Major Lewis Ingles. N & W: Giant of Steam. Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing Company, 1980.

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Parramore, Thomas C, Peter C. Stewart, Tommy L. Bogger. Norfolk: The First Four Centuries. Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1995.

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Schlegel, Marvin W. Conscripted City: Norfolk in World War II. Norfolk, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Inc., 1991.

*The Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch* (various).

*The Virginian Pilot* (various).

Wertenbaker, Thomas J. Norfolk: Historic Southern Port. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1962.

**Sponsor** (Individual and/or organization, with contact information. For more than one sponsor, please use a separate sheet.)

Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>	O'Connor Brewing Company		
	(Name)		
521 West 25th Street	Norfolk	VA	23517
(Address)	(City)	(State)	(Zip Code)
kevin@oconnorbrewing.com	757-632-BEER (2337)		
(Email Address)	(Daytime telephone including area code)		

In the event of organization sponsorship, you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: Mr. Kevin O'Connor, President

Daytime Telephone: (757) 623-BEER (2337)

**Applicant Information** (Individual completing form)

Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>	Marcus R. Pollard			Commonwealth Preservation
Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/>				Group
	(Name)			(Firm)
PO Box 11083	Norfolk	VA	23517	
(Address)	(City)	(State)	(Zip Code)	
marcus@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com	757-651-0494			
(Email Address)	(Daytime telephone including area code)			

Applicant's Signature:

Date: 5/30/2014

**Notification**

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. <input type="checkbox"/>	Marcus D. Jones			City Manager
Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Hon. <input type="checkbox"/>				(Position)
Norfolk	1101 City Hall Building, 810 Union Street			
(Locality)	(Address)			
City of Norfolk	VA	23510	757-664-4242	
(City)	(State)	(Zip Code)	(Daytime telephone including area code)	

Please use the following space to explain why you are seeking an evaluation of this district.

**The sponsor is renovating a building within the proposed district and may be interested in rehabilitation tax credits.**

Would you be interested in the State and/or the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes ☒ No ☐

Would you be interested in the easement program? Yes ☐ No ☒